

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT (BOP)

The Memphis "Commercial Appeal" newspaper, issue of Saturday morning, March 30, 1968, reported in detail concerning the activities of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on March 29, 1968, the day following the march which resulted in rioting and stated in a story on page one by Reporter Thomas BeVier that King came to Memphis to star in what was billed as a "dress rehearsal" for his scheduled April 22, 1968, "Poor People's Crusade" on Washington, D. C., and that "by his own non-violent standards, the rehearsal was a flop." The story stated that King in a press interview on March 29, 1968, reported that he would be back in Memphis as early as April 3 and not later than April 5, 1968, for another mass march and was quoted as saying, "We're going to have a massive non-violent demonstration in Memphis." The story continued that the question being asked in Memphis and the nation "is whether-- with the increasing militancy of black youth--anyone can say with certainty that a non-violent demonstration will stay that way."

The story continued that King stated in an interview, "I am convinced we can have a non-violent demonstration," but he was reported as adding that it was impossible to "guarantee" that there would not be any violence. The story stated that it was significant that King was more than a half hour late for his 11:30 a.m. press conference on March 29, 1968, because he was at that time meeting with three members of the black power group which the paper referred to as "the Invaders."

BeVier in this story reported that these three young men refused to give their names and stated that they would have their own press conference at a later time.

The story continued that King was staying in a \$29.00-a-day room at the Holiday Inn Rivermont and that King claimed to the newspaper that he did not realize when he came to Memphis that there were those in the Negro community who were "talking about violence." He stated, "We (SCLC) had no part in the planning of the march. Our intelligence was nil." He said that if he had known there

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~